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Guerrilla Sales & Marketing

## Time for Annual Sales Checkup

LORI TURNER

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Lori Turner

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The secret to selling success boils down to how well salespeople execute in a few key areas – the fundamentals – or “blocking and tackling” as one of my clients calls it.

While there can be a variety of scapegoats for flat or declining sales, in the end, the true culprit is generally one or more missing fundamentals: the right talent, proper training, accountability and motivation.

Reinvigorate your sales efforts with this four-point sales checkup:

**Checkpoint 1 – The Right Talent:** First and foremost, do you have the right talent in the right jobs? Are farmers assigned hunters’ roles and vice versa? Farmers prefer cultivating existing customer relationships. Hunters get their energy from hunting for new opportunities. Training a farmer to hunt requires significant time and resources. If you’re not sure how well your team fits in the roles for which they’re assigned, consider a web-based sales assessment tool.

**Checkpoint 2 – Sales Skills:** Next, assess your team’s skill level. Shadow each of your sales reps. Sit with them while they make their sales calls and ride along to prospect meetings.

Do they adequately prepare for sales calls? How sharp are their phone skills? When calling prospects do they use a point of connection to build rapport and provide a compelling reason to meet?

Do they listen actively? Do they conduct an effective needs assessment, identifying the prospect’s pain point? Are they strong closers, keeping the ball in their court? Do they successfully overcome prospect objections?

After your assessment, develop an individualized training and coaching plan for each salesperson.

**Checkpoint 3 – Accountability and Tracking:** When you’re confident you have the right people properly trained, look at how you’re holding them accountable.

Be sure you have an electronic means of tracking your team’s activity – who they’re calling on, when, the result of that call, and next steps.

Boost success and reduce sales force frustration by focusing on sales activity versus revenue numbers. While a sales rep can’t control whether a prospect writes a check on schedule, he can control his activity. If he’s doing enough of the right activity and has the proper skills, the numbers will eventually follow.

Is a rep struggling? Management has a responsibility to help inexperienced reps. Team green reps with experienced ones to demonstrate skills firsthand on a live sales call where the veteran rep or sales manager is in the driver’s seat.

**Checkpoint 4 – Motivation and Attitude:** Finally, take a look at each individual’s attitude and motivation level. Is your compensation plan incenting the right behaviors? Is your rep staying positive or is he pre-determining a negative outcome on a sales call before ever making it?

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PROPERTY SALES	49	49	15,316
MORTGAGES	102	102	24,929
FORECLOSURE NOTICES	0	0	10,295
BUILDING PERMITS	0	0	40,826
BANKRUPTCIES	60	60	18,966
BUSINESS LICENSES	15	15	5,348
UTILITY CONNECTIONS	103	103	26,767
MARRIAGE LICENSES	28	28	5,477

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If the results of your four-point check-up worry you, get some help. Recruiters can help find the right talent. Fractional sales managers, sales trainers and coaches can get your salespeople – and you – back in the winner's circle.

*[Lori Turner](#) is managing partner of RedRover Sales & Marketing, [www.redrovercompany.com](http://www.redrovercompany.com). You can follow her on Facebook and Twitter.*

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